

Emergency Preparedness and Response
Maryland Mental Health Volunteer Corps
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Room 541
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Maryland Disaster Mental Health Volunteer Corps

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) is recruiting volunteer behavioral health crisis counselors to be members of The Maryland Mental Health Volunteer Corps. The Corps is a part of the Maryland Professional Volunteer Corps.

Events such as terrorist attacks, the La Plata Tornado, the sniper attacks, and Hurricane Isabel have affected many of the state's resident in recent years.

The support and educational services provided by the behavioral health community to those impacted has been a central element of healing and building resiliency.

Following significant crisis, a range of stress responses may be evidenced by those impacted. Although expected, these reactions may be extremely distressing for victims and survivors. In some cases, they may temporarily impair the ability of some individuals to manage complex tasks related to accessing tangible and financial resources.

Volunteer roles and responsibilities depend on our mission and your individual skills: "Maryland Health Care Professional Volunteer Corps consists of health care professionals working together to provide emergency care for the citizens of Maryland by responding to catastrophic events throughout the state of Maryland." As volunteers you will be providing relief to victims of disasters and helping people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

Requirements

Mental Health professionals who are currently licensed and are in good standing with their licensing boards are eligible to become volunteers.

Prospective members of the Maryland Mental Health Volunteer Corps must complete an application which is included in this mailing and return it to the coordinator of the Corps. The application serves as registration to attend the training course.

Once the mental health professionals license is verified to be in good standing with their licensing board the applicant will be registered for training and will receive a confirmation letter.

Upon successful completion of training, the applicant will be added to the DHMH Disaster Mental Health Volunteer Corps Database. These volunteers will be used on an individual call-out basis during emergencies. Assignments will be based on location, area of expertise and hours of availability.

Continuing Education

The Maryland Disaster Mental Health Volunteer Corps Training is sponsored by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Mental Health Services Training Center, University of Maryland, Baltimore.

A certificate for 6.5 Continuing Education Units or 6.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours of Category I will be awarded upon completion of the training and evaluation. The Mental Health Services Training Center is authorized by the Maryland Board of Psychologists as a sponsor of Continuing Education Units and by the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners as a sponsor of Category I Continuing Education. The center maintains responsibility for this program. A certificate of attendance will be made available for nurses, and all other disciplines.

Training

Applicants must attend a full-day training program to include the following:

- Overview of the Mental Health Corps
- Signs and symptoms of stress and distress
- Intervention approaches for individuals
- Intervention approaches for groups
- Needs of special populations
- Care of the provider
- Role play and scenario based exercises

During training the applicants will be required to complete additional paperwork to include volunteer authorization form and identification badge.

Schedule

Schedule includes registration, breaks and lunch.

Wednesday, July 20, 2005

CCBC-Catonsville

8am to 5pm

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

CCBC-Essex

8am to 5pm

Tuesday, August 16, 2005

Chesapeake College

8am to 5pm

Questions and Accommodations

If you have any questions or to request accommodations for the training please contact

Katie Anelli, Coordinator Mental Health Corps at
kannelli@dhmh.state.md.us